

Peer-review report of

Perez, M.J., Beam, A.J., & Small, P.A. (2026). Race, memory, and colorblindness: Critical history and deconstructing United States democracy. *advances.in/psychology*, 1, e316437. <https://doi.org/10.56296/aip00053>

Round 1

Editor Decision

Dear Authors,

Thank you for submitting your intriguing manuscript, “Race, Memory, and Colorblindness: Critical History and Deconstructing American Democracy,” to our special issue on the Psychology of Pushback. We were fortunate to receive reviews from two longstanding experts in the field, and we greatly appreciate their detailed and constructive feedback. In addition, we carefully evaluated your manuscript ourselves before consulting the external assessments.

We are all enthusiastic about your contribution. The manuscript addresses an important issue, integrates multiple theoretical perspectives, is well-structured, and achieves its stated aims. As Reviewer 1 observes, “There is a lot to like about this work. This work combines critical race theory, critical psychology, and cultural psychology to conduct a historical analysis detailing the contexts that democracy has failed minoritized groups...This is a timely and insightful paper that fits well with understanding democratic backsliding.” Similarly, Reviewer 2 remarks, “The paper was a pleasure to read, being very well written and informative. I believe that this paper would be widely read and cited (I could easily envision myself citing a version of this paper).” We fully concur with these positive evaluations.

At the same time, both reviewers provide important feedback on how the potential of your submission can be further realized. We will not repeat all of their points here, but we ask that you address each in your revision. We do wish, however, to highlight several areas, including both those identified by the reviewers and those that emerged from our own independent reviews of your work, that we consider especially important.

While those of us who reviewed your work found the manuscript to be engaging and clearly written, we believe that the work would benefit from grounding it more explicitly in the theme of the special issue, going more deeply into certain literatures, and making a stronger case about how the current work advances theory in this area – including fuller consideration of the generalizability of the dynamics you discuss to other intergroup contexts. Addressing these issues will require some reframing and rewriting of the current manuscript, but we believe that with appropriate revision it can make a strong contribution to the Special Issue. We are pleased to invite you to revise the manuscript for further consideration for publication.

One basic set of revisions that we are requesting involves introducing the work in a way that better informs the diverse audience for your work about the theoretical underpinnings of it and the ways it can potentially advance theory in the study of intergroup relations generally and the psychology of pushback more specifically. Early in the manuscript, as you introduce the conceptual cornerstones of your research – critical race theory, critical and cultural psychologies, and the psychology of collective memory – please briefly describe each of the frameworks. Then, before you begin your detailed analysis, please include a paragraph or brief section explaining how you are synthesizing these frameworks and what novel theoretical advance your synthesis promises. Then, use your integrative perspective as a touchstone, linking your narrative more directly to the novel aspects of your conceptual framework.

You clearly situate your work with respect to “how America's ignorance to histories of racism [is] exploitable by authoritarian ideologies.” However, it is also important that (a) you articulate early on how it relates more specifically to the psychology of pushback, and (b) thinking more broadly, the extent to which your analysis generalizes (or does not generalize) to other forms of intergroup relations beyond Black-White relations in the United States. These points should be mentioned relatively briefly in the Introduction but merit full consideration in the Discussion. It is possible that the critical role of slavery of Black people in the United States could limit some of the conclusions drawn from this research, but some elements of your work could offer insights into the dynamics of intergroup relations more broadly. Given the international audience of the journal, it is important that you discuss both the limitations and generalizability of your conclusions (for instance in a [Constraints on Generality](#) section).

Both reviewers encourage you to connect your work more closely with existing psychological research and perspectives. We, the Editors of the Special Issue, wholeheartedly agree. For example, Reviewer 1 asks you to “include more discussion of the psychological implications of these structures,” to include research on specific topics such as scapegoating, and to consider more fully how your analysis connects to other theory and to existing work on applications and interventions. Similarly, Reviewer 2 notes, “The psychological aspect needs boosting considerably” and urges you to engage more extensively with psychological literature on colorblindness, decategorization, individual differences in authoritarianism, system justification theory, and social dominance theory. We agree that making these connections will strengthen the paper's impact and appeal to a broader audience. Both reviewers also suggest various references that should prove valuable. How effectively you are able to integrate your analysis with the rich psychological literature on intergroup processes will be a key element of the evaluation of your revised manuscript.

Further, Reviewer 1 recommends that you more clearly define and operationalize the core constructs. Meanwhile, Reviewer 2 raises concerns about your proposed solution to the problem, asking that you evaluate its effectiveness more critically and

consider alternative approaches. Addressing both points will further strengthen an already strong paper.

In addition to these and the remaining points raised by the reviewers, we noted a few issues that require attention in a revision:

- The section “Constructing American Democracy with White Supremacy in Mind” ends somewhat prematurely in historical terms. It would strengthen the manuscript to include reflections or analysis of how the developments you describe leave traces in more recent periods of U.S. democracy, which you also touch upon later (e.g., severe protracted educational inequalities).
- While your analysis is generally nuanced, we encourage you to avoid broad generalizations, such as “Because of this insulation White people have difficulty critically reflecting on race.” We raise this point because, as you can anticipate, the manuscript is likely to be closely scrutinized by readers critical of your perspective.
- Please acknowledge recent developments when it comes to the White = American argument. e.g., Morehouse et al. (2025) find: “Fifth, over the past 17 years, implicit and explicit American = White associations decreased by 41% and 47%, respectively, and 14/14 demographic subgroups changed towards neutrality.” (<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-024-83794-6>) What nuance does this add to your argument?
- In addition to the alternative perspectives highlighted by the reviewers, we encourage you to consider another relevant perspective: the tendency of dominant groups to “close chapters” of dark pasts under the often false premise that such pasts have been successfully addressed, which in turn increases perceived in-group morality. How do these dynamics compete with or complement the colorblind processes you focus on?
References: <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.8337> <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672221124674>
- Please address a few stylistic issues:
 - o Please make sure to streamline the use of curved or straight punctuation.
 - o Throughout the manuscript, use the term “U.S. American” instead of “American” when referring to the U.S., to avoid the impression of U.S. centrism.
 - o Please add the date “1954” to “landmark court case Brown v. the Board of Education,” as international readers may be less familiar with it.
 - o As the reviewers also note, there are smaller typos, double punctuation, etc. which are to be expected in a long text. Nevertheless, please proofread carefully.
 - o The citations and references need major attention. Please solve all issues highlighted in this report (note that the report contains some false positives that you can ignore). Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15f1GJKZ41 Js5-USYjr2Nno43t89yNqO/view?usp=sharing>

In sum, we see great potential in your submission, though we believe there are several ways it can be further strengthened. We therefore invite you to submit a revised version by September 25. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require additional time.

Sincerely,

Jonas R. Kunst & John F. Dovidio

Reviewer 1

Racism & Democracy Review July 2025

Race, Memory, and Colorblindness: Critical History and Deconstructing American Democracy

There is a lot to like about this work. This work combines critical race theory, critical psychology, and cultural psychology to conduct a historical analysis detailing the contexts that democracy has failed minoritized groups, highlighting incidents of slavery, immigration, eugenics, etc. to highlight the structures that oppress minoritized individuals and that America has never been truly democratic for all. You touch on important psychological mechanisms, including collective memory and colorblindness to address how the denial or racial history prevents the recognition of democratic backsliding. The focus on marginalized racial groups directly connects to the context of DEI deconstruction. This is a timely and insightful paper that fits well with understanding democratic backsliding. To improve impact, I would suggest more clearly outlining your proposed psychological mechanisms, expanding on implications for resistance / intervention.

Broader Theoretical Assertions

- The authors do a great job in explicating the structures historically put in place to facilitate authoritarianism and talking about the theory of mutual constitution as mind and context make each other up. It would improve the paper to include more discussion of the psychological implications of these structures, either for dominant group members (who benefit from authoritarian structures so wouldn't necessarily be shocked by the democratic sliding, but may feel a sense of intergroup competition to maintain power) or for minoritized group members (who are exploited from authoritarian structures, so perhaps also wouldn't be surprised continuing to not have power).
- To what extent are authoritarianism being used in a classic political sense or are being redefined in the content of racial oppression? I would spend more time distinguishing how authoritarian is not just defined by oppression but by specific political psychological dynamics. When discussing histories of minoritized groups, make more explicit how these match authoritarian characteristics (e.g., forced relocation and surveillance of Indigenous people as state control; Jim Crow Laws as institutionalized hierarchy and punishment for non-compliance; COINTELPRO & suppression of Black resistance movements as silencing dissent).

- Colorblind racism explanation could benefit from tighter operationalization. I would have liked greater elaboration of **colorblind racism as a theory of how it functions as an ideology in a racialized social system** and deeper connection with authoritarianism democracies. Can you discuss further how colorblind ideologies and the assertion of essential sameness obscures power inequalities and justifies the racial status quo (Bonilla-Silva, 2011). Relatedly, how are identity motivations wrapped up in knowledge about past injustice (Nelson et al., 2014)? For example, consider Malherbe and colleagues (2021) **racism of zero point**, or tendency to abstract racism from history and portray dominance and subordination as in cases of colorblind equipotential intergroup relations. How does abstracting away from context to a sufficient distance arrive at an ahistorical construction of racism? See also Mosley, Biernat, & Adams (2023) for experimental applications.
- Can you further elaborate on the tension between colorblind ideologies that dictate norms of racelessness and assimilation to a white racial frame (Feagin) that subtly reinforce adherence to Whiteness?

Related theoretical paradigms / applications

- Consider discussion the work on scapegoating (Sullivan et al., 2014; Rothchild et al., 2012) as it relates to justifications of stereotypes and authoritarian nostalgia (e.g., the dehumanized narratives of indigenous people as savage at the same time of rationalizing their extermination (p. 6).
- There is some great relevant work how the field of psychology aides in the authoritarian consolidation of power and ignorance to histories of racism, including the negative portrayal / removal of Arab people from textbooks (Bar-Tal, 1999, Al-Haj, 2005), as well as removal of the term “racism” from psychology textbooks to have more general processes of cognition or affect (Adams & Omar, 2024)
- In your discussion of counternarratives and meaning making, consider discussing Duker et al., (2022) on positive reappraisal

Policies

- With decreased funding towards national news outlets (NPR, PBS), what does this mean for rising authoritarianism in America in terms of policies facilitating epistemic violence towards the knowledge and experiences of marginalized groups? (Teo, 2010)?
- At what points of education should policies regarding learning about citizenship and civic engagement be introduced? If the biggest issue of colorblind racism is a lack of education about past historical racism, when should it be implemented into the curriculum (e.g., youth, high school, college?)

Interventions

- If Dominant groups prefer sanitized versions of reality (E.g., Kurtis, 2005; Salter & Adams), how can we motivate them to care about the critical histories that cause

discomfort? Perhaps see Bilewicz (2016) who discusses historical defensiveness as an obstacle in intergroup reconciliation.

- What does it look like to create anti-racist worlds (expanding on the section: using historical perspectives to envision a new democracy for all)? What does it look like to go beyond critical consciousness and deconstruct dominant narratives? See Freel & Bilal (2021) for connections and potential mechanisms between collective action and historical narratives. Also see Rios (2022) for reducing colorblind threats to the self.

- Could you also please elaborate further on how to best engage with histories such as Mauritius (other than just acknowledgement). There was some mention of it in the beginning, and then and then end, but I was left wanting to know more about the country and how it set up appropriate cultural affordances to allow for high scores on indexes of political freedom and peace?

Minor Things

- Two periods at the end of second to last sentence “race (Gotanda, 1991)..”p. 31
- Streamline sentences for conciseness and to avoid redundancy.

References

Adams, G., & Omar, S. M. (2024). Confronting racism-evasive ignorance in standard pedagogy of hegemonic social psychology. *Journal of Social Issues*, 80(2), 607-628.

AL-Haj, M. (2005). National ethos, multicultural education, and the new history textbooks in Israel. *Curr. Inq.* 35, 47–71. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-873X.2005.00315.x

Bar-Tal, D. (1999). The Arab-Israeli conflict as an intractable conflict and its reflection in Israeli textbooks. *Megamot* 29, 445–491.

Rios, K. (2022). Multiculturalism and colorblindness as threats to the self: A framework for understanding dominant and non-dominant group members' responses to interethnic ideologies. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 26(4), 315-341.

Rothschild, Z. K., Landau, M. J., Sullivan, D., & Keefer, L. A. (2012). A dual-motive model of scapegoating: displacing blame to reduce guilt or increase control. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 102(6), 1148.

Sullivan, D., Landau, M. J., Rothschild, Z. K., & Keefer, L. A. (2014). Searching for the root of all evil: An existential-sociological perspective on political enemyship and scapegoating. *Power, Politics, and Paranoia: Why People Are Suspicious of Their Leaders*, 292-311.

Freel, S. H., & Bilali, R. (2022). Putting the past into action: How historical narratives shape participation in collective action. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 52(1), 204-222.

Malherbe, N., Ratele, K., Adams, G., Reddy, G., & Suffla, S. (2021). A decolonial Africa (n)-centered psychology of antiracism. *Review of General Psychology*, 25(4), 437–450.

Mosley, A. J., Biernat, M., & Adams, G. (2023). Sociocultural engagement in a colorblind racism framework moderates perceptions of cultural appropriation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 108, 104487.

Teo, T. (2010). What is epistemological violence in the empirical social sciences?. *Social and personality psychology compass*, 4(5), 295-303.

Bilewicz, M. (2016). The dark side of emotion regulation: Historical defensiveness as an obstacle in reconciliation. *Psychological Inquiry*, 27(2), 89-95.

Rodriguez, J. (2006). Color-blind ideology and the cultural appropriation of hip-hop. *Journal of contemporary ethnography*, 35(6), 645-668.

Duker, A., Green, D. J., Onyeador, I. N., & Richeson, J. A. (2022). Managing emotions in the face of discrimination: The differential effects of self-immersion, self-distanced reappraisal, and positive reappraisal. *Emotion*, 22(7), 1435.

Reviewer 2

In this submission the authors discuss whether America ever had a true democracy, especially from the perspective of racial minorities (and to a lesser extent, women). The paper was a pleasure to read, being very well written and informative. I believe that this paper would be widely read and cited (I could easily envision myself citing a version of this paper).

Having said that, I have some recommendations for improvements.

MAJOR CONCERNS

Although psychologists would be interested in this paper, it does not read enough as psychology paper in a psychology journal. The psychological aspect needs boosting considerably.

For example, the authors are encouraged to draw on the psychological literature on color-blindness (and how it often represents racism at the level of the individual and/or justifies the status quo). (e.g., Knowles et al., 2009; Plaut et al., 2018; Yogeeswaran et al., 2018). Also, as part of this discussion: decategorization is

difficult to sustain and thus is not terribly effective in prejudice reduction (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000).

The authors can also expand on individual differences in authoritarianism, especially citing people such as Adorno et al., Altemeyer, Duckitt, Alain Van Hiel. More could also be added relevant to system justification (John Jost), and social dominance theory (Jim Sidanius).

The scientific racism section could also cite this:

Saini, A. (2017). *Inferior: How science got women wrong and the new research that's rewriting the story*. Beacon press.

I do not envision this as a major rewrite to the paper. I think the paper could maintain its basic structure, but each section include more on psychological theories and findings.

MAJOR 2

The paper, in my opinion, stresses too much that informing people of inequality, or learning about the outgroup, will pay off for society. In fact, the psychological literature is much more mixed on this potential, if not pessimistic. For example, from the Pettigrew & Tropp (2008) meta-analysis: "Thus, simply knowing more about the outgroup typically does not have a major effect on reducing prejudice as demonstrated by the effects observed in these samples". Exercises such as perspective-taking work better, or contact-based interventions. I really think the authors need to pare back the "knowledge" based interventions and to talk up others that are more supported by the psychological literature. It is true that dominant groups do not know enough about outgroups, but learning more would have a minimal impact, in large part because prejudice is about dominance and group position (Bobo, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) relative to ignorance. Dominant groups don't oppress because they don't have enough knowledge about the outgroup; rather prejudice is an expression of power and dominance that maintains the status quo.

MAJOR 3

The reader would benefit from a discussion (or framing, introduction) regarding how constructs like racism and authoritarianism can exist at both Level 1 (the individual) but also Level 2 (society). And then direct the reader to the level(s) that will be the focus of the present work. A clear statement mapping out this distinction early would be very beneficial.

MINOR ISSUES

P5 “This does not consider race as something that is systemic....” It’s not clear that race can be systemic. (Moreover, race is a social construct, and the authors should address this point)

P6. The authors make a solid point regarding racism being present on both the political left and right. But it would also be important (and accurate) to discuss how prejudice against minorities tends to be stronger on the right (e.g., Hodson & Puffer, in press; Sibley & Duckitt, 2008; Van Hiel et al., 2019), even if present on the left.

The authors need to ensure that they include all citations in references. For instance, they cite Jardina & Spencer 2023 but there is no such paper listed.

If the authors agree, the sentence “This racist attitude persisted even though many indigenous communities of North America had democratic societies prior to contact with White colonists” could be added to, to include the irony that many of the European colonists were from countries that were not democratic or marginally democratic at the time.

The discussion would be more fulsome if the authors also discussed the one-drop rule in American legal history, and (from within the psychological literature, the hypodescent construct e.g. Ho et al., 2011).

Given the timeliness of this submission, I encourage the authors to discuss Trump’s recent attacks on DEI, even (or especially) at universities.

P18. The authors are encouraged to discuss the work by Maureen Craig and colleagues on the “threat” posed by demographic shifts. (e.g., Craig & Richeson, 2014; Earle et al., 2023). (I later see that this is mentioned on page 21 but this

should be expanded upon and come earlier in the paper. This will all aid with making the paper more “psychological”).

The authors need to reread the entire document for minor typos. For instance, this sentence alone contains several typos: “Thisdisparity, combined with geographical proximity, has enabled a persistent flow of U.S.-manufactured firearms into o Latin American...” (p. 23). But please check the full document.

As it presently stands, the Conclusion risks sounding a bit naïve. Many people want a return to the past not out of a mistaken sense of past glory, but because they recognize that in the past White men held the bulk of power, something they seek. I would consider rewriting this paragraph so that it is not misread (deliberately or otherwise).

References

Bobo, L. D. (1999). Prejudice as group position: Microfoundations of a sociological approach to racism and race relations. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3), 445–472. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00127>

Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (2000). *Reducing intergroup bias: The common ingroup identity model*. Psychology Press.

Earle, M., Hodson, G., & Craig, M. A. (2022). Privilege lost: High-status group perceptions of and reactions to eroding social hierarchies. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 25(3). <https://journals.sagepub.com/toc/gpia/25/3>

Ho, A. K., Sidanius, J., Levin, D. T., & Banaji, M. R. (2011). Evidence for hypodescent and racial hierarchy in the categorization and perception of biracial individuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100(3), 492–506. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021562>

Hodson, G., & Puffer, H. (in press). The evolving nature of generalized prejudice toward marginalized groups in the United States 2004–2020. *Social Psychological*

and *Personality Science*,

19485506241305698. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19485506241305698>

Knowles, E. D., Lowery, B. S., Hogan, C. M., & Chow, R. M. (2009). On the malleability of ideology: Motivated construals of color blindness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(4), 857–869. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013595>

Plaut, V. C., Thomas, K. M., Hurd, K., & Romano, C. A. (2018). Do color blindness and multiculturalism remedy or foster discrimination and racism? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(3), 200–206. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721418766068>

Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2008). How does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? Meta-analytic tests of three mediators. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 38, 922–934. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.504>

Sibley, C. G., & Duckitt, J. (2008). Personality and prejudice: A meta-analysis and theoretical review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 12(3), 248–279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868308319226>

Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. Cambridge University Press.

Yogeewaran, K., Verkuyten, M., Osborne, D., & Sibley, C. G. (2018). “I have a dream” of a colorblind nation? Examining the relationship between racial colorblindness, system justification, and support for policies that redress inequalities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 74(2), 282–298. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12269>

Van Hiel, A., De Keersmaecker, J., Onraet, E., Haesevoets, T., Roets, A., & Fontaine, J. R. J. (2019). The relationship between emotional abilities and right-wing and prejudiced attitudes. *Emotion*, 19(5), 917–922. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000497>

Round 2

Editor Decision

Dear Authors,

Thank you for submitting your revised manuscript, “Race, Memory, and Colorblindness: Critical History and Deconstructing American Democracy,” to our special issue on the Psychology of Pushback. Please accept our apologies for the delay; we encountered difficulties in securing a second evaluation from one of the original reviewers. Rather than delaying the process further, we have made a decision based on the other reviewer's second evaluation and our own reading of the manuscript.

Both the reviewer and the editorial team are impressed by your thorough revisions. The paper is impressive in its coverage and is now accessible to a much broader audience. We have identified only a few remaining, mostly presentational issues we would like you to address, along with the remaining concerns by the Reviewer. Given your responsiveness to the last round of comments, we anticipate that you will be able to address these remaining issues relatively easily.

Visualizations: While the paper’s scope is a significant strength, it also presents a challenge regarding digestibility among a broad audience. The manuscript would benefit greatly from visualizations or tables to summarize the content. Specifically, we suggest the following three items:

- A conceptual flowchart illustrating the cycle of colorblindness and authoritarianism (or an alternative visualization of your overarching framework/argument).
- A comparative timeline contrasting the colorblind narrative of U.S. history (and the recent democratic backsliding according to that perspective) with your critical narrative of exclusion.
- A table comparing counternarratives to the mainstream narrative. This would help stimulate ideas for potential interventions.
- Please note: Any figure needs to be inserted directly into the document as SVG file (can be imported from most programs, such as PowerPoint), to ensure high resolution. Do not hesitate to reach out to us if you would like to discuss some figure ideas /sketches.

Social Dominance Theory (SDT): Thank you for integrating complementary perspectives. While you have included SDO, the reviewers’ request was to incorporate the overarching and much richer Social Dominance Theory (SDT). Although sometimes pitted against CRT, SDT offers many converging analyses. For instance, from an SDT perspective, colorblindness would be viewed as a legitimizing myth or a hierarchy-enhancing ideology. Importantly, the theory argues that these myths or ideologies are often consensually held by both liberal and conservative majority-group members, emphasizing that despite differences, the variance shared between them is substantial (although often overlooked) and contributes to the

stability of the unequal status quo. Thus, SDT could be useful for paragraphs such as the following: “While much of the discourse frames bipartisanship as a threat, this debate obscures an enduring feature of U.S. politics: Across history, White people from both political parties have united to preserve White supremacy and withhold democracy from POC - even when divided on other ideological fronts.” Relatedly, the current, brief focus on SDO is not yet fully integrated into the argumentative flow and structure. It is also not fully clear how relevant it is to your arguments. As you work to integrate SDT into your rationale, you might also consider research that considers the relationship between the dynamics of SDO and authoritarianism (specifically, Right Wing Authoritarianism, represented by work on “dual processes” (e.g., Osborne, D., Costello, T.H., Duckitt, J. *et al.* The psychological causes and societal consequences of authoritarianism. *Nat Rev Psychol* **2**, 220–232 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-023-00161-4>). We are not asking you to make a definitive case that pits these various perspectives against one another. Instead, we look for you to situate your approach within the current landscape of relevant research and theory as you develop your rationale and formulate your conclusions.

In addition, please address the following:

- **Punctuation Consistency:** Thank you for attending to previous punctuation issues. However, there are still repeated inconsistencies (e.g., curly vs. straight quotation marks/apostrophes). We want to ensure your paper is stylistically as polished as possible, so please address these issues.
- **Specific Punctuation Corrections:** The paper is very well written, but we did note some punctuation issues. On p. 4, please delete the comma after “threat” in the sentence, “To say that U.S. democracy only now is under threat, is a perspective that ignores the mistreatment many have faced.” In the sentence below (the semicolon should be a comma): “While psychological research has found that authoritarian personality is often related to racist attitudes (Van Hiel, 2005); viewing racism as something that happens solely at an individual level obfuscates the myriad of ways that it is impactful on a societal level (Bonilla-Silva, 1997).” Please review the next version of the manuscript carefully for punctuation issues.
- **APA7 Formatting:** There remain several issues related to citations and references, which do not fully align with APA7 standards. Please run your manuscript through our tool at <https://apa.advances.in>. As you will see, it identifies several errors caused by stylistic issues, such as:
 - **Magaloni, B. and Kricheli, R. (2010)** -> should be **Magaloni, B., & Kricheli, R. (2010)**
 - **Linz JJ (2000)** -> should be **Linz, J.J. (2000)**
- **Reference Alignment:** There are also references that do not align with the citations. For instance, (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008) is cited in the text, but the

entry in your reference list is: “Pettigrew, T. F. (2017). Social psychological perspectives on Trump supporters. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 5(1), 107–116. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v5i1.750>”. As another example, the citation you have in the text on p. 4 is (Adorno, 1950). It should be (Adorno et al., 1950). As you correctly indicate. In the references, the authors are Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford.

- **Review of Automated Checks:** Please thoroughly work through all identified issues in the app and re-upload the file in the app to validate the corrections. Additionally, please ensure you use the DOI check. Note that the app is probabilistic; false positives may occur, which you can ignore.
- **Sentence Structure:** The final sentence, while summarizing the content of your paper well, is very long and heavy on jargon: “By highlighting and challenging the misrepresentations of dominant histories that have reproduced authoritarianism in the past and given rise to it again in the present we suggest resistance should consider history and the potential of constructing more race conscious history to construct new cultural affordances that can instill imagination and construction of a democracy for all.” Please consider breaking it into two sentences and simplifying it:

In sum, we see great improvement in your submission and believe it will become a cornerstone in the field. Our remaining requested revisions are intended to fully realize the potential impact this important piece will make. We ask that you submit a revised version within one month, by **January 10**. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require additional time.

Sincerely,

Jonas R. Kunst & John F. Dovidio

Reviewer 1

This paper has much going for it, and it has improved as a result of the review process. The topic is timely and important, and the overall message (that the US has a strong authoritarian past, especially from the perspective of POC) is one that needs to be better understood.

For the most part, the authors have responded to the review process admirably, taking seriously the criticisms and recommendations raised.

The paper is now more psychological in tone. Personally, I wish it was even more psychological in tone and focus (given that this is a psychology journal). The treatment of authoritarianism involves a very light touch. It's not clear that naïve

reader would be able to glean what is meant by authoritarianism. This strikes me as a shortcoming, given that the paper is essentially about authoritarianism (and colorblindness).

Some of the writing still needs attention (e.g., commas where semi-colons would be helpful).

Here is one example (among several) of a poorly worded sentence: “These arguments are laden with abstract liberalism by rationalizing race in individualistic terms and by invoking complaints of equal opportunity for White students; despite, history curriculum already privileging their history.” (the problem is the last half of the sentence, and how it fits with the first half).

P31. I don’t think most social psychologists would find this statement correct: “Treating groups as members of a singular identity (i.e., colorblindness) has challenges”. Colorblindness is more akin to decategorization (seeing individuals); a singular identity is more akin to recategorization (seeing a single group).

Reviewer 2

No review comment provided

Round 3

Editor Decision

Dear Authors

Thank you for another round of diligent revisions. We are pleased to inform you that your paper is now ready for publication. Congratulations on an important contribution to the field.

The manuscript offers a refreshing perspective that we believe will enrich our special issue and stimulate further thought and discussion among readers.

Best regards,

Jonas R. Kunst & John F. Dovidio